

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, December 10. 1692. Licens'd, E. B.



Quest. 1. **W**hat think you of the Drs. Notion of Paradise, who believes it to be Parabolical, Chap. 7?

Answe. We think the Dr. evidently contradicts himself, for in Chap. 7. p. 278. after having cited several Opinions, he says, *Denique, qui nobiscum Sentium in terra quidem, sed alia ab hodierna, verum Paradisum, qui jam transiit, Olim floruisse tradunt.* And lastly, *The Opinion of those which we assent to, that the true Paradise was situated in the Earth that was destroy'd, not in this that is now.* And in Page 284. says, *Quod eorum captiu & ingenio accommodatus, Hortum Amanum conciperere, Sec. Moses accommodated himself to the apprehension of the People, so as to give 'em the Idea, or Notion of a pleasant Garden:* And a little after, p. 287. he calls it, *Allegorian secundum Arcanum Sensum Mosis, adding atque hunc sensum eo libentius Amplexor, &c. viz.* That 'twas an Allegory, and that Moses had a secret meaning, and that he (the Dr.) more willingly embraced that Opinion, because there's no place in the World in which all the Notes and Characters of that Garden meet. Tho' there's no need of confuting any Notion that thus destroys it self, we shall now prove, according to our promise, *That the principal Characters, viz.* the four Rivers, *that are mention'd in the History of Paradise, are at this day certainly known, and that the very place where the Garden stood can be assign'd very near.* And first, *That Euphrates and Tigris, (which every one agrees were two of the Rivers) came both from the same Fountain;* for these two encompassing *Mesopotamia, give it its Name.* Salust also afferts the same, as cited by Origen, l. 13. c. 21. *de flumin.* *Salustius autem Author certissimus assertit Tigrim & Euphratem uno Fonte Manare in Armenia.* Salust an Authentick Author afferts, that *Tigris* and *Euphrates* proceeded from the same *Fountain.* The Learned Boetius was of this Judgment, who discoursing how Casual Events are guided by Providence, as the Common Fountain out of which they flow, illustrates it by the Simile of *Tybris* and *Euphrates*, *de Consolat. Philosop.* l. 5. *Carm.* 1.

*Rupis Achæmenicæ Scopulis, ubi versa sequentum,
Pectoribus figit Spicula pugna fugax,
Tigris & Euphrates, uno se Fonte resolvunt,
Et mox abjunctis dissociantur Aquis.*

Add yet to this the Testimony of *Lucan* in his *Pharsalia*, lib. 3.

*Quaque caput magno tollit cum Trigide magnus
Euphrates, quos non diversis fontibus edit
Persis* —

Lucan here gives 'em the same rise, only says they came out of *Perisia*; but 'tis notorious with the Writers of those Times to call all those Countries *Perisia* that lay under the Dominion of the *Perisia Monarchy*, and thus *Farnab. in lacum* takes it. These Testimonies considered, we have two Rivers, *Euphrates* and *Tigris*: So that having the Fountain of one, we want not the other. And *Ptolemy*, (as also *Pliny*, lib. 5. cap. 24.) tells us, that *Tigris* issues out of the South-side of the Mountain *Taurus*, in lat. 39, 40. where the place of the Garden of *Eden* must therefore be very near.

Now we come to show, That the other Rivers were only Branches of *Tigris* — *Tigris* after having past the *Gordian Mountains*, and being ready to enter into *Syria*, parts its Streams asunder, encompassing that Countrey. This is plain from *Epiphanius in Anchoret.* n. 58. the Eastward branch (according to *Ptolemy* in the Editions of *Jacob Esclar.*) running on the back of the Mountain *Niphates*, and the Westward bends its course towards *Euphrates*. The Eastward is this

Gibon which the Scripture mentions: it wou'd be too long to collect what the Ancients have said in proving, that *Gyndes*, *Indus*, and *Cydnus*, are the same with the River *Gibon*. See *Sabellicus Ennead.* l. 1. *Dionisius Perieges*, *Herdotus*, lib. 1. n. 189, 190. *Stephanus, Justin, Histor.* l. 11. *Strabo in Geog. lib. 1.* *Vadiamus* in his Appendix to his Commentaries upon *Mela*. And lastly, *Epiphani. lib. de 12. Gemmis*: But this Particular being not much contested by any, we need proceed no further about the River *Gibon*.

As for the Westward Branch of *Tigris*, it separated it self again at *Apadania*, and made the other two Rivers *Hiddekel* and *Pison*. That there is such a Division, is plain from *Plin. Hist.* lib. 6. cap. 27. about *Apadania*. The Northern Streams he calls *Tigris Minor*, the Southern *Delas*, which by its Course exactly answers the Character *Moses* gives of it, who says that it goeth towards the East of *Affyria*, Gen. 2. 14. according to the description of *Geog. Nub.* who says, (part 6. Clim. 4.) *Facit ab occidente Tigris, &c.* Thus also when *Daniel* was Governor of *Susiana*, he saw his Vision upon the Banks of the great River *Hiddekel*, Dan. 10. 4.

As for the last River, the River *Pison*, here not only *Junius*, but all the Learned agree, that the Name *Pasatyrgris*, given it by *Pliny*, and others, was easily alter'd from *Pystygris*, which exactly answers to the Situation of the place, by several Texts, Gen. 25. 18. 1 Sam. 15. 7. which is so clear, we need proceed no further.

Lastly, 'Tis observable, that all these Rivers, or the places where these Rivers lye, are mention'd in the Bible, after the Flood: So that the Earth cou'd not possibly be destroy'd, as the Dr. wou'd have it. See for *Pison*, *Eccl. 24, 25.* for *Havilah*, see 1 Sam. 15. 7. for *Cush*, or *Ethiopia*, encompass'd by *Gibon*, 'tis very frequent in profane and Sacred Writ; for *Ashur*, or the East of *Affyria*, where *Hiddekel* was, and has now another Name, 'tis as common: As for *Euphrates*, we need not mention it again. Thus we hope we have fairly prov'd the Situation of the Garden of *Eden*, mention'd in the History of the Creation, to be no Allegory, nor Contradiction, but such a great Truth as our Drs. Theory can't shake.

Quest. 2. P. 289. *Why was not the Woman afraid of the Serpents speaking to her?*

Answe. She cou'd fear no ill that knew none.

Quest. 3. P. 290. *Were all the Creatures (as well as the Serpent) Vocal in Paradise as all the Trees were in the Dodonian Wood? Or was it the Serpent only; if the last, how came that to deserve the benefit of Speech above the rest?*

Answe. The Serpent only, which in a few words, has but just out-rival'd the mischief of such Questions.

Quest. 4. P. 290. *By what Authority may we believe the Devil spoke in the Serpent, for the Letter of Moses intimates no such thing?*

Answe. Yes, in Gen. 4. 15. *He (our Saviour) shall bruise thy (Satan) head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Quest. 5. P. 291. *Why shou'd the Serpent Ite pronus in Ventrum, Creep upon his Belly, for his Penalty? Or did he walk upon his Tail before?*

Answe. Probably not the last, but the first, that so oft as we see a Serpent, so oft we shou'd see an Hieroglyphick of Man's Fall and Redemption.

Quest. 6. P. 292. *What wou'd have become of the numerous issue of Adam, if he had not sinn'd, wou'd that one Tree of Life fed 'em all, or how shou'd they have come by it?*

Answe. See our Saviours Answer to the Devil, when he tempted him with Hunger.

Quest.

Quest. 7. p. 292. *Nescio quid sive, &c. usque ad manus manum fricat?*

Ans^w. This cou'd not be the modest Dr. who talks in his Preface of a *Chariorem ipsa Vita Religionem*, of Religion being dearer than Life.

Quest. 8. p. 293. *Whence had Adam and Eve their Needle and Thread in the first day of their Creation?*

Ans^w. There was no need of any for what you have translated *Consuerunt*.

Quest. 9. p. 293. *Why did that Butcher of an Angel destroy the whole Race of some Creatures in skinning of them to Cloath Adam and Eve, for there was but two of a kind Created?*

Ans^w. Who tells you there was but two and two of a kind Created at first? You are not yet got to the Ark, but *Query*, How came any Creatures at all to be preserved when *your Earth was destroy'd*? You should Answer a Million of such Absurdities before you Catechise *Moses*, and the Sacred Truths he has laid down.

Quest. 10. p. 293. *Whether the Fable of the Dragons keeping the Apples of Hesperides be not like the Cherubims keeping the Tree of Life?*

Ans^w. 'Tis so like, that 'tis a Confirmation of the Truth; for near the *Thespian-Lake*, so called by *Procopius*, tho' by *Sirabo* it be call'd *Arsena palus*, which is just by the Fountain of the River *Tigris*, there's a place call'd *Syphreitis*, by some *Hypereitis* and *Hysperatis*, where 'tis suppos'd the very Garden of *Eden* stood, which no doubt gave Life and Name to that Place and Fable you mention.

Quest. 11. p. 295. *Why shou'd an Infamous Beast destroy at once the Elaborate Work of six days made by an Almighty hand?*

Ans^w. No, 'twas Disobedience, and *Eve's* questioning the Truth of God, as too many do in this Age.

Quest. 12. p. 281, 282. *What think you of the Dr's Paraphrase upon Moses, and the Dialogue betwixt Eve and the Serpent; as also in that betwixt God, Adam, Eve and the Serpent, in their Examination and Sentence?*

Ans^w. We look upon the greatest part of it to want that Caution and Prudence as a matter of so great consequence might have justly claim'd, especially from one of his Character: And supposing we shou'd allow *Moses* to speak here in a sense, which tho' mystical, yet not without a due and suitable end proper for the Authority of *Moses*, (as the Dr. himself elsewhere grants) how unjust and unfair a Treatment wou'd it be to that great Law-giver to be ridicul'd, because he speaks not Physically as the Dr. does: Some passages are ludicrous enough, and suited to the Style of *Terrence's* Comedies, perhaps taken out of 'em; and the whole has such an Air in it, that the Wits of the Tovvn have w^tht he'd have gone thro' all the Bible after the same manner; an effect We doubt not but the Dr. will be sorry to hear of.

Quest. 13. p. 306, 307. *Why is the Dr. so troubled to reconcile the Waters above the Firmament with those under the Firmament, the first of which seems to be above the Stars, the Stars being placed but in the Firmament?*

Ans^w. Perhaps the Dr. has not consider'd the Original of the word Firmament, in the Hebrew, which signifies an Expanse, or thing expanded: Nor are those Words of *Moses* above and under the Firmament properly translated in the English; they shou'd not have been *supra expansum, sed desuper expanso*, a very usual Pleonasm of the Preposition *superne, super, juxta*, for the word is not יְלִקְעָה but עַלְלִקְעָה which things considered, the great Disputes that have been upon this place, need not be any distraction to us, for we find the Fovvls to be said to fly in the Firmament of Heaven, the Stars to be set in the Firmament, and *Job* 26. 6. *Which bindeth the waters in the Clouds, and the Cloud is not broken under them:* Nowv it being all one Expanse, from the Face of the Earth to the highest Regions; thus Birds may be said to fly in the Firmament, and the Waters according to the foremention'd place of *Job*, may be said to be properly divided from the Waters below by the Firmament, or some part of the Expanse.

Quest. 14. p. 321, 322. *The Dr. seems very sensible that his Treating of Moses at such a rate may give offence to ma-*

ny of the sober part of Mankind, and begins to raise several Objections himself, which he answers by way of Obviation: Query, Whether his Answers are sufficient, or whether he had not better conceal'd such Notions in his own Breast, and deny'd himself a little vain Reputation, than have hazarded the Interest of Religion, especially in such an Age as this?

Ans^w. His Ans^wers are really as good as the Case will bear, and no more can be expected from 'em. To the latter part of the Question, We doubt a very unhappy Consequence will give it in the Negative.

Quest. 15. *The Dr. seems to build his whole Theory physically: Query, When did Nature arrive to such a degree of Perfection, that any thing cou'd be said to be Naturally done?*

Ans^w. Nature can't be properly said to be perfect (or consequently a thing done Naturally) before the Essential Law^s of Nature are constituted themselves by the Author of it; therefore it appears to us a great Weakness in the Dr. to talk of Physicks, and Natural Effects in a Chaos, which nothing but an Almighty hand cou'd bring into any Order.

⇒ In the next *Mercury* will be given an Account of a very Ingenious Project newly found out for the Ladies Entertainment these Winter Evenings.

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